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An

Inaugural Thesis

on

Cynanche Trachealis

by

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of

Virginia

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Cynanche Trachealis

This disease has received a variety of names as Cynanche Trachealis, Cynanche Stridula, Morbus Strangulatorius, Angina Epidemica, Angina Polyposa, Croup &c. But the term Tracheitis is preferable, because we then have a name indicative of the seat and nature of the disease.

"Croup, according to the definition of Cullen, consists in an inflammation of the Glottis, Larynx, or upper part of the Trachea, whether it affects the Membranes of those parts or the Muscles adjoining. This definition I think in part exceptionable, because according to the dissections of all the authors whom I have consulted, it is not confined to the upper part of the Trachea; but on the contrary, we frequently find the disease extending through the whole course of the Trachea, into the Bronchia, and sometimes even into the substance of the Lungs.

It is strange that we have no account of this disease prior to the time of Home who wrote about the year 1765, and according to Cullen was the first who gave an accu=

rate description of it. It is however said, that Martin Chizi an Italian, wrote upon the disease so early as the Year 1749. Since the time of the two Physicians just spoken of, it has been treated of by various authors in the different quarters of the world & is now so well understood, that it is no longer considered as it was formerly among the opprobria medicorum. But a Physician now attacks Croup with as much confidence of success, as he does a Pleurisy or any other acute disease.

Croup has been considered by some authors as contagious. We see however no reason for considering it as such. It has prevailed as an Epidemick; as was the case in Alexandria in the Year 1811, and in Philadelphia in 1809, ~~when~~ and in this latter place was productive of considerable mortality. It selects for the subjects of its attack children from the time they are weaned untill the 5th year, more generally after that time the predisposition to the disease gradually wears away. Some children are liable to it untill the age of puberty, and in some rare instances, even after they have arrived at a more mature age, they are attacked

by the disease whenever exposed to the exciting causes. Those who have once had an attack, are subject to many more; but the succeeding ones are milder than the first. It was supposed by the generality of Authors for a long time, that the disease was confined entirely to children. But we have a memorable instance to the contrary, in the death of our distinguished countryman Genl George Washington.

Causes

The chief exciting cause of this disease is Cold applied in various ways to the surface of the body, cold feet, sudden changes of temperature, a cold moist day succeeding a warm. And hence the disease is more common in the Spring than any other season of the year. It is particularly frequent in marshy countries and places near the seacost; as Sea-port Towns. A celebrated Author thinks it not improbable that certain states of the alimentary Canal may assist in producing this disease

Croup has been divided by Authors into Spasmodic and Inflammatory. It does evidently appear that ~~in~~ those cases in which the disease makes its attack suddenly

and almost as speedily in some instances destroys the life of the patient, that it must partake of the nature of Spasm, and if this Spasm be not relieved by prompt and active means, inflammation will in a short time succeed.

The disease makes its attack variously; it sometimes comes on in the night without any obvious cause. The patient in this case is ~~attacked~~ suddenly aroused from sleep about midnight with a hoarse dry & shrillous cough, which has been compared by some to the barking of a dog ~~and~~ by others to the crowing of a Cock. The pulse at this time will be found quicker than ~~natural~~ usual. There is at the same time considerable difficulty of respiration: the child is unusually restless, he moves from side to side in the bed, and appears conscious of some imminent danger. These symptoms continue to increase, the difficulty of respiration becomes greater, the head is thrown back, the face flushed, the eye suffused, the pulse quick and irritable, amounting to almost 200 in a minute. The disease continues; profuse sweats break out on the surface of the body, the extremities become cold, the eye appears wild, the lips tongue and throat are parched & finally convulsions succeed

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

the lines in this disease.

[illegible] the number of the lines [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] are used they should not be applied to the throat [illegible] lest by the power of deglutition destroy the life of the patient. Dr Chapman has seen two [illegible] they had nearly proved fatal; they should then be applied to the sides and back of the neck.

As soon as the most urgent symptoms are removed, and the susceptibility of the system to our remedies somewhat restored, we should open the bowels with purgatives. Calomel is almost universally resorted to by physicians, but they are not agreed as to the mode of its exhibition. Some recommend it in small but repeated doses.

[illegible] than in larger ones that it may act speedily and promptly. In this particular stage of the disease observes Professor Chapman [illegible] of the lungs [illegible] the disease symptoms, obviates a relapse, & confirms the convalescence.

Though the force of the disease will [illegible] be broken down by these remedies, [illegible] remain some hoarseness & sometimes considerable soreness about the chest & deficiency of expectoration. [illegible] different expectorants come in with advantage, such as Ammonia, Lime, Solution of Tartar Emetic, the Wine Syrup, which is spoken of in high terms by Professor Coxe and is prepared by him in the following manner:

Take of Seneca Snake root bruised

Squills sliced and bruised each half pound

Water . . . . . eight pounds.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

The Croup, or Croup, has an acute [illegible]
epidemic character [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] decidedly on it.

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
the nervous hemorrhagic or spasmodic constriction [illegible]
[illegible]. By an active employment of the remedies above mentioned the disease may generally be cured, but if by any deviation of the disease or by negligence, it is suffered to continue for eight or ten hours, it extends down the Trachea and sometimes even to the lungs themselves, producing [illegible] of mucus or perhaps more generally coagulable lymph, and in some instances a sanguineous congestion of these organs is the consequence as was the case in a dissection made by Dr Baird of N. York. When the disease continuing to

comes the same as Pneumonia Notha.

The symptoms in this advanced stage of the disease differ somewhat from the first. The voice becomes more [illegible], the cough hard and dry, and at the same time [illegible] a great degree of wretchedness & anxiety. All the symptoms which indicate a consequent [illegible] of the lungs are now developed; [illegible] difficulty of breathing, the [illegible] bluish mottled, the cheeks have a circumscribed flush, the [illegible] enlarged, the [illegible] treated attended by a peculiar expression of the [illegible]. In [illegible] the non [illegible] more [illegible] difficult the [illegible] establish; [illegible] times when the patient is [illegible] the [illegible] becomes more [illegible] the pain [illegible] very great.

[illegible] Pneumonia [illegible] in the last [illegible] to detect the [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] well [illegible]

erally be relieved.

Moderate venesection may also be resorted to; but if the system be much debilitated it may be better first to use leeches. It is always necessary under these circumstances to detract blood cautiously; as there is already so much blood taken from the general circulation and retained as it were, in the lungs, that we by detracting more might cause irreparable mischief.

Blisters large enough to cover the whole side of the chest will be found very beneficial. Sometimes a more prompt ~~[illegible]~~ vesication may be demanded by the urgency of the symptoms than can be made by the ordinary mode of applying Cantharides; we may ~~then use~~ substitute pledgits of lint dipped into a decoction of Cantharides made with Spirits of Turpentine.

We may next resort to the different Expectorants such as Oxymel or Vinegar of Squills, the Wine Syrup, Solution of Tartar Emetic &c. Each of them has been used with advantage: but perhaps the best expectorant in this case is Calomel used in small but repeated doses. This Medicine has been considered as a Specific in this disease: the Scotch physicians are devoted to it; by one of them of considerable celebrity Dr Hamilton the professor at Edinburgh

it is spoken of in the most enthusiastic terms. He observes that if it be administered previous to the accession of the lividness of the lips and other mortal symptoms, he has always succeeded in every case of croup, without any shock to the constitution of the child. His mode of administering it would indeed appear to be bordering upon rashness, were we not to take into consideration the extreme insensibility of the system to our remedies in this disease. He has administered upwards of two hundred grains in the twenty four hours to a child two years old.

The Modus operandi of Calomel is I think intelligible; it stimulates the excretory vessels of the Bronchiæ and lungs to action & thus enables them to throw off the Mucus with which they are loaded.

Thus I have concluded this imperfect essay upon Cynanche Trachealis. I have intentionally passed over the operation of Bronchotomy or Laryngotomy in silence. It is now considered to be rarely if ever necessary, as we can not distinguish those cases in which it might prove serviceable. The operation is condemned by Cheyne as absurd & impracticable and says that no good & faithfull surgeon should perform it.